

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

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P R 232156Z AUG 77
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INFO SECDEF UASHDC
CNO WASHDC
USCINCEUR
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON
CMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 200863

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MNUC, SP

SUBJECT: NPW VISITS TO SPAIN

REFS: A. MADRID 6059 (DTG 131638Z AUG 77)
B. MADRID 6055 (DTG 131547Z AUG 77)
C. MADRID 6142 (DTG 181109Z AUG 77)
D. CNO WASHINGTON DC 290004Z JUL 7;

1. SUMMARY. THIS TELEGRAM PROVIDES VIEWS ON COURSE OF
ACTION TO PURSUE IN SPAIN TO FURTHER NPW PORT ACCESS.
END SUMMARY

2. REFTELS A AND B PROVIDED USEFUL AMPLIFYING INFOR-
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MATION REGARDING SPANISH TURNDOWN OF PALMA PORT VISIT
REQUEST. WE CONCUR WITH YOUR PROPOSAL (REFTEL C) TO
RAISE THE COMMERCIAL PORT VISIT QUESTION AT A HIGH LEVEL
TO OBTAIN AN INDICATION OF POLITICAL CLIMATE BEFORE
SUBMITTING A REQUEST TO PMAA. PARA 1(A) REFTEL C REPRE-
SENTS THE OPTIMUM COURSE OF ACTION. HOWEVER, THE ALTERNATIVE
IN PARA 1(B) HAS CERTAIN SHORTCOMINGS WHICH LEAD US

TO QUESTION ITS UTILITY IN FURTHERING OUR LONGER TERM OBJECTIVES.

3. THE HIGHEST PRIORITY OBJECTIVE, AS STATED IN REF D, IS TO OBTAIN ACCESS TO COMMERCIAL PORTS IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN SUITABLE FOR THE CVN. CARTAGENA, BECAUSE OF ITS SIZE, CANNOT ACCOMMODATE A SHIP THAT LARGE. WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT A SUDDEN CHANGE OF EMPHASIS IN THE LIST OF DESIRED PORTS ALREADY PROVIDED TO THE SPANISH MIGHT DELAY PROGRESS IN ORDERLY COMPLETION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEYS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PRELIMINARY SURVEY WORK IS STILL IN PROGRESS AT BARCELONA WITH A DECEMBER COMPLETION TARGET, AND NO SURVEY WORK HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN AT CARTAGENA. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE JOINT USN-SPANISH NAVY EFFORT AT ROTA TO EXPAND EXISTING SURVEY BOUNDARIES, THE PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF A PORT, ACCORDING TO OUR OBSERVATION, REQUIRES MORE TIME THAN THE THREE AND A HALF MONTHS AVAILABLE. WE WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO REQUEST A VISIT TO CARTAGENA, UNLESS WE HAD ASSURANCE THAT THE INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SURVEY COULD BE COMPLETED IN TIME FOR SUCH VISIT.

4. IN VIEW OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, WE BELIEVE THE PREFERRED COURSE OF ACTION TO BE AS FOLLOWS:

A. PROCESS THE VISIT REQUEST FOR THE SSN TO ROTA IN CONFIDENTIAL

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OCTOBER IN THE USUAL FASHION.

B. IN YOUR MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE GUTIERREZ MELLADO, REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR A 3-4 DAY VISIT TO ROTA ABOUT 11 DECEMBER BY THE CVN AND ONE CGN TO CONDUCT TURNOVER, WITH ANOTHER CGN CONCURRENTLY AT PALMA.

C. IF PALMA REMAINS UNACCEPTABLE FOR THE CGN, REQUEST BARCELONA FOR THE SECOND CGN, EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE WE PLACE ON HAVING AVAILABLE TO OUR CVN AND CGN ONE OF THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN PORTS FREQUENTLY USED BY OUR CONVENTIONALLY POWERED AIRCRAFT CARRIERS.

5. WE APPRECIATE THE IMPLICATION OF REFTTEL C THAT EMBASSY VIEWS CARTAGENA MORE ACCEPTABLE POLITICALLY TO GOS THAN EITHER PALMA OR BARCELONA. WHILE CARTAGENA MIGHT PROVIDE US A "FOOT IN THE DOOR," ITS PREDOMINANTLY NAVY TOWN CHARACTER WOULD PROVIDE PUBLIC REACTION TO NPW OF LIMITED POLITICAL VALUE. IN FACT, ANY PUBLIC REACTION, OR LACK OF IT, MIGHT ONLY SERVE TO REINFORCE A SPANISH IDEA TO RESTRICT NPW TO PORTS WITH SIGNIFICANT SN INFLUENCE.

WE AND DOD RECOGNIZE THAT SKIPPING THE CARTAGENA POSSIBILITY AT THIS TIME MAY RULE OUT NPW VISITS OUTSIDE ROTA FOR SOME PERIOD, BUT PREFER TO MAINTAIN GENTLE BUT FIRM PRESSURE FOR THE LARGER PORTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. CHRISTOPHER

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